men are generous enough to renounce all of it. If the deceased had an ebisa, or if the parents-in-law give their son-in-law a substitute, the possessions fall to her. She even inherits the fields [culture] that have been set up by her kinswoman, to the extent that they have not been destroyed. Under other circumstances the cultivated lands [plantations] are never left to the family of the deceased.

The only items to which a woman is entitled strictly speaking are the various portions of the bride price and similar payments awarded to her by Nkundó law: goats and spiral bands and the mother's gifts as part of the bride price; the cloth and belt given at a funeral. At a wife's death these possessions pass to her clan, if she has not previously given them to her relatives. In no case may they be appropriated by the husband.

Finally, when a wife dies she may leave a tool (knife, hoe, etc.) to her daughter. This custom is observed particularly by very active women in order to inculcate their daughters with the love of work. Such an object often became an heirloom, transmitted from mother to daughter for several generations. It is called bonóhdjwá (from tóhola, "to leave to"; see the Latin reliquiae) or, among the Bombwanja, elíli. These terms are also applied to other objects included in the inheritance when these are considered separately (altogether they are called lokuta, "patrimony," "property," or lisangá, "inheritance"). Such a bonóhdjwá can never be appropriated by a husband. [447]

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Article VIII

Death of the Fiancé Before the Payment of the Bride Price

Here we shall deal with the situation resulting from the death of a husband during the engagement, after the payment of the ikalá or the nkanga but before the wala. The procedure for dissolving an engagement may already lead us to suppose that death also breaks it without any special difficulties. And in fact, if the fiancé dies the woman is free. Therefore she may go home, and the family of the deceased is reimbursed for the payments that have been made.